

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
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AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
/USMISSION NATO 5124
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
EUCOM
USCINCEUR
CINCUSAFE
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5296

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, TU
SUBJECT: NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE-- DEMIREL ANSWERS ECEVIT AND TUNC

REF: ANKARA 5254 (DTG 131345Z JUL 77)

1. SUMMARY: DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS FOR FORMATION OF CONSERVATIVE COALITION CONTINUE WITH COMING WEEKEND AS ANNOUNCED TARGET FOR COMPLETION BUT WITH OUTCOME STILL UNCERTAIN. DEMIREL COMMENTS ON STATEMENTS BY ECEVIT AND LABOR LEADER TUNC AND SUGGESTS NEITHER UNDERSTANDS THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. TUNC SAYS HE DID NOT MEAN
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FOR HIS STATEMENT TO BE PROVOCATIVE. DESPITE OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN, THE EFFORTS TO FORM A CONSERVATIVE COALITION CONTINUE, APPARENTLY UNAFFECTED. OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN MIGHT, HOWEVER, FURTHER AGGRAVATE THE ALREADY SERIOUS PROBLEM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WHICH HAS REMAINED AT EXTREMELY HIGH LEVEL DURING ECEVIT'S THREE WEEKS IN OFFICE. END SUMMARY
2. THE LEADERS OF THE THREE PROSPECTIVE COALITION PARTIES MET

JULY 13 TO DISCUSS MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENTS. THE MEETING LASTED FOR SLIGHTLY MORE THAN ONE HOUR, AFTER WHICH EACH PARTY LEADER MET WITH LEADERSHIP GROUP FROM HIS OWN PARTY. ANOTHER MEETING OF THE THREE LEADERS HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR THE AFTERNOON OF JULY 14.

3. THERE HAS BEEN WIDESPREAD SPECULATION ABOUT THE EXPECTED MAKE-UP OF THE COALITION CABINET; HOWEVER, VERY LITTLE OF THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO JOURNALISTS AND OTHER OBSERVERS APPEARS TO BE BASED ON INSIDE KNOWLEDGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH IS BEING CLOSELY HELD. JUSTICE PARTY (JP) DEPUTY CHAIRMAN YILDIRIM, IN BRIEF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION AFTER ALL-DAY MEETING JULY 14, TOLD US THAT "NOTHING" HAD BEEN SETTLED AND NO DEFINITE STATEMENT OR PROGNOSIS COULD YET BE MADE. NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) CHAIRMAN ERBAKAN TOLD JOURNALISTS JULY 13 THAT THREE PARTY LEADERS STILL HOPED TO COMPLETE THEIR NEGOTIATIONS BY THE COMING WEEKEND.

4. JUSTICE PARTY (JP) CHAIRMAN DEMIREL RESPONDED EVENING JULY 13 TO STATEMENTS BY PRIMIN ECEVIT AND TURK-IS PRESIDENT TUNC REPORTED REFTEL. DEMIREL CALLED ECEVIT A "DISASTER MONGER" AND SAID ECEVIT'S STATEMENTS INDICATED THAT HE ACCEPTED DEMOCRACY ONLY WHEN THINGS WENT HIS WAY. HE SAID THAT ECEVIT SEEMED TO FEEL THAT VOTES RECEIVED BY THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) WERE WORTH MORE THAN THE VOTES OF OTHER PARTIES. INSTEAD OF COUNTING THE VOTES, DEMIREL SAID, ECEVIT WOULD LIKE TO WEIGH THE VOTES AND ASSIGN A GREATER WEIGHT TO THOSE WHICH HE RECEIVED. IN RESPONSE TO TUNC'S THREAT TO CALL A GENERAL CONFIDENTIAL

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STRIKE IF DEMIREL IS SUCCESSFUL IN FORMING A COALITION GOVERNMENT, DEMIREL SAID THAT THE NATION HAD MADE ITS CHOICE IN THE ELECTION AND IT WOULD NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY THREATS OF VIOLENCE IN THE STREETS

5. APPARENTLY STUNG BY TURKISH GENERAL STAFF CHIEF SANCAR'S STRONG REACTION TO HIS STATEMENT (REFTEL), TUNC ISSUED A SUBSEQUENT STATEMENT JULY 13 IN WHICH HE SAID HE HAD NOT MEANT TO BE PROVOCATIVE AND THAT SOME OF THE COMMENTS HE HAD MADE HAD BEEN TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT AND MISINTERPRETED. SANCAR'S STATEMENT IS BEING INTERPRETED IN ANKARA NOT ONLY

AS AN ANSWER TO TUNC BUT ALSO AS A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN DEMIREL'S EFFORTS TO FORM A NEW COALITION. PRO-DEMIREL TERCUMAN SPLASHED SANCAR'S STATEMENT-- AND A COLOR PICTURE-- ACROSS ITS FRONT PAGE, WHILE THE PRO-RPP PRESS GAVE IT ONLY SECONDARY COVERAGE.

6. COMMENT: OPPOSITION ELEMENTS ARE CONTINUING A CONCERTED EFFORT TO THWART THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONSERVATIVE COALITION GOVERNMENT. THE RPP IS LEADING THE CAMPAIGN AND IS BEING ASSISTED BY SYMPATHETIC ELEMENTS IN THE PRESS, THE LABOR MOVEMENT, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, AND OTHERS. THESE EFFORTS HAVE HAD NO APPARENT EFFECT ON THE GOVERNMENT FORMATION PROCESS, ALTHOUGH IT CONTINUES TO BE SAID THAT SOME WITHIN THE JP, PARTICULARLY THE FORMER DEMOCRATS, ARE LESS THAN HAPPY ABOUT FORMING A COALITION

WITH ERBAKAN'S NSP.

7. REGARDLESS OF ITS EFFECT ON THE GOVERNMENT FORMATION PROCESS, THE ANTI-DEMIREL/ERBAKAN/TURKES CAMPAIGN MAY WELL BE SETTING THE STAGE FOR SOME INCREASE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. ECEVIT'S PREDICTIONS OF DISASTER IF THE RIGHTIST GOVERNMENT IS FORMED ARE NOT NECESSARILY CALLS TO ACTION, BUT VIOLENCE-PRONE ELEMENTS ON THE LEFT MAY CHOOSE TO INTERPRET THEM AS SUCH. RECENT VIOLENT INCIDENTS SUGGEST THIS INTERACTION MAY ALREADY BE OCCURRING. DESPITE THE MUCH-HERALDED DETERMINATION OF THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT TO RESTORE DOMESTIC PEACE, THE LEVEL OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE APPEARS TO HAVE INCREASED SOMEWHAT DURING ITS THREE WEEKS IN OFFICE. MOREOVER, MOST OF THAT VIOLENCE APPEARS TO ORIGINATE WITH THE LEFT AND TO BE DIRECTED AT THE EXTREME RIGHT. NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP) DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL SOMUNCUOGLU COMPLAINED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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JOURNALISTS JULY 13 THAT SINCE ECEVIT HAD TAKEN OFFICE, 42 PERSONS HAD DIED IN CRIMES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND "MOST OF THEM WERE NATIONALIST (I.E., RIGHTIST) YOUTH". HE SAID THE CHARACTER OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE HAD CHANGED SO THAT DEATHS OCCUR NOT AS A RESULT OF CLASHES BETWEEN GROUPS BUT AS A RESULT OF "PLANNED MANHUNTS AND PREMEDITATED MURDERS".

8. SOMUNCUOGLU'S COMPLAINTS ARE PROBABLY EXAGGERATED, BUT THEY ARE NOT BASELESS. GIVEN THE CHARACTER OF THE NAP AND ITS MILITANT SUPPORT ELEMENTS, RETALIATION CAN BE EXPECTED.

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